

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AGRE-00 USIA-15 AID-05 EB-08 AF-10 ARA-14
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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0004
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 00883

FODAG

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: EAGR, PORG, OTRA
SUBJECT: FOOD CORPS - MORGENTHAU'S VISIT

REFERENCE: STATE 61241

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A MEMORANDUM APPROVED BY THE
SECRETARY ON MARCH 1, 1978. THE TEXT IS PROVIDED AS
BACKGROUND FOR THE FOOD CORPS CONSULTATIONS WITH DR. RUTH
MORGENTHAU PER REFTTEL.

2. "ISSUE FOR DECISION - IS THE FOOD CORPS A VIABLE IDEA?
IF SO, WE SHOULD MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM ACCORDED IT BY
AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S SPEECH.

3. "ESSENTIAL FACTORS - AMBASSADOR YOUNG IN AN ADDRESS
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GIVEN IN HIS PERSONAL CAPACITY TO THE FAO CONFERENCE ON
NOVEMBER 14, 1977, PROPOSED THE IDEA, FIRST SUGGESTED BY
DR. RUTH MORGENTHAU, OF A FOOD CORPS, AS ONE STEP TOWARD
REDUCING HUNGER. THE UNIQUE FEATURES OF FOOD CORPS ARE
ITS EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPMENT AT THE VILLAGE LEVEL, THROUGH
RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF SPECIALIZED VOLUNTEERS COMING
MOSTLY FROM THE LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, THE EXCHANGE OF

VOLUNTEERS AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND MANAGEMENT
LARGELY BY LDC OFFICERS THEMSELVES.

4. "THOUGH THE FAO DELEGATES HAD NO ADVANCE NOTICE, MANY
SPOKE IN FAVOR. THE WEST AFRICANS EXPRESSED SUPPORT,
BUT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT HAVING
AN EFFECTIVE VOICE IN FOOD CORPS AND NOT HAVING IT TIED TOO
CLOSELY TO THE FAO. THE PHILIPPINES PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD
FOOD COUNCIL AND DELEGATES FROM SEVERAL OF THE INDUSTRIAL-
IZED COUNTRIES ALSO ENDORSED THE PROPOSAL. A FEW WERE
SKEPTICAL, PARTICULARLY THE CUBANS AND THE CHINESE. THE
TANZANIAN DELEGATION ENTHUSIASTICALLY WANTED TO PUSH A
STRONG ACTION RESOLUTION THROUGH THE CONFERENCE. TO
ALLOW FURTHER STUDY, THEY SOFTENED THEIR POSITION. THEY
PERSUADED THE AFRICAN GROUP TO SPONSOR, AND THE CONFERENCE
TO SUPPORT, A CONSENSUS DECLARATION ASKING THE FAO
DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO STUDY THE PROPOSAL AND REPORT TO THE
74TH FAO COUNCIL IN NOVEMBER 1978.

5. "TO EXAMINE THE PROPOSAL WITHIN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT,
IO FORMED A STUDY GROUP WITH REPRESENTATION FROM AID,
PEACE CORPS/ACTION, AGRICULTURE, AND USUN. THE WHITE HOUSE
OMB AND A NUMBER OF CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS ALSO PARTICIPA-
TED.

6. "THIS MEMORANDUM ONLY ADDRESSES THE CENTRAL PREMISE
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BEHIND THE FOOD CORPS PROPOSAL. THE ACTUAL STRUCTURE OF
THE FOOD CORPS AND ITS INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTABILITY WILL
ONLY EMERGE AFTER AN EVALUATION BEING CONDUCTED BY THE FAO
AND PROPOSED CONSULTATIONS WITH INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS.

7. "A. THE NEED FOR A FOOD CORPS - THE INTER-AGENCY
STUDY GROUP CONCLUDED THAT THE FOOD CORPS IDEA IS VIABLE.
UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS, IT CAN HELP REDUCE WORLD HUNGER
IF ENOUGH ATTENTION IS PAID TO THE LESSONS OF THE PAST,
BOTH OF EXISTING VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS AND OF FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE EFFORTS IN POOR COUNTRIES. THIS CONCLUSION
WAS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING:

8. "--VILLAGE LEVEL IMPACT: LOCAL AS WELL AS INTERNA-
TIONAL VOLUNTEERS WORKING TOGETHER CAN PROMOTE BETTER
NUTRITION AND HIGHER INCOMES AT THE VILLAGE LEVEL BY
ENSURING THE DELIVERY AND ADAPTATION OF TECHNICAL ASSIST-
ANCE AND BY INVOLVING VILLAGERS.

9. "--EFFECTIVENESS OF EXISTANT VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS: EXIST-
ING PROGRAMS ARE INVOLVED IN VARIOUS ANTI-HUNGER EFFORTS.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS IS TOO FEW AND

THE EFFORTS ARE TOO FRAGMENTED AND SELDOM COORDINATED WITH
LOCAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS.

10. "--COST EFFECTIVENESS: AID ESTIMATES THAT THE
ANNUAL COST TO SUPPORT A DEVELOPMENT TECHNICIAN EXCEEDS
\$60,000. FULL-TIME VOLUNTEERS WOULD COMPLEMENT AND EXTEND
THE WORK OF SUCH TECHNICIANS. (PEACE CORPS ESTIMATES THAT
TOTAL AGENCY COST PER VOLUNTEER IS \$15,000.)

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11. "B. METHOD OF OPERATION - THE CONSENSUS OF THE
STUDY GROUP WAS THAT THE CORPS OF FOOD VOLUNTEERS SHOULD:

12. "--BRING THE BEST TECHNICAL EXPERTISE TO BEAR ON THE
FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS OF THE FOOD DEFICIENT
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES;

13. "--GO ONLY WHERE THEY CAN BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART
OF ON-GOING RURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS;

14. "--AUGMENT, NOT DUPLICATE, CURRENT NATIONAL, BILATERAL
MULTILATERAL, AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL EFFORTS;

15. "--OPERATE WITH MINIMAL BUREACRACY BY WORKING THROUGH THE EXISTING INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM;

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16. "--STRENGTHEN THE TRAINING AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND NOT DRAIN THEIR HUMAN RESOURCES;

17. "--ESTABLISH STRINGENT CRITERIA FOR SELECTION AND TRAINING SO THAT VOLUNTEERS WOULD BE QUALIFIED BOTH TECHNICALLY AND IN CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION; AND

18. "--WORK WITH LOCAL VOLUNTEERS AND PROVIDE FOR THE ORDERLY PHASE OUT OF THE NON-LOCAL VOLUNTEERS WITHIN A STRICT TIME FRAME.

19. "C. TASKS - AN INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER GROUP WOULD STIMULATE IMPROVED VILLAGE FOOD PRODUCTION, FOOD STORAGE WATER MANAGEMENT, FISH FARMING, POULTRY PRODUCTION, RANGE MANAGEMENT, FOOD PROCESSING, AND MARKETING SO AS TO IMPROVE NUTRITION.

20. "D. COOPERATION BETWEEN FOOD CORPS AND EXISTING VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS - THE STUDY GROUP CONCLUDED THAT:

21. "--BILATERAL EFFORTS ARE SOMETIMES SUSPECTED OF BEING MOTIVATED BY NATIONAL INTEREST. MULTILATERAL EFFORTS USUALLY BEST OVERCOME THESE SUSPICIONS;

22. "THE FOOD VOLUNTEERS WOULD NOT COMPETE WITH THE PEACE CORPS AND OTHER SUCH GROUPS BUT COULD INVOLVE THESE GROUPS IN RECRUITING AND PERHAPS TRAINING VOLUNTEERS SO AS TO ENGAGE THEIR SUPPORT, LEARN FROM THEIR EXPERIENCE, AND KEEP NEW COSTS TO A MINIMUM; AND

23. "JOINT PROJECTS COULD BE DEVELOPED TO ENSURE THAT THE ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES OF THE FOOD CORPS AND OTHER

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VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER.

24. "CONCLUSIONS--VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS SHOULD BE SEEN AS EFFECTIVE AND COMPARATIVELY INEXPENSIVE RESOURCES FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. VOLUNTEERS, IF SUITABLY TRAINED AND TECHNICALLY SUPPORTED, CAN COMPLEMENT

AND EXTEND THE WORK OF EXPERTS. THEY CAN FULFILL SOME OF THE TASKS FOR WHICH HIGHLY PAID PROFESSIONALS TRADITIONALLY HAVE BEEN RECRUITED.

25. "VOLUNTEERS ARE MOTIVATED AND ADAPTABLE. THEY REACH INTO REMOTE AREAS, AND HELP LINK VILLAGERS TO THE AVAILABLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

26. "FOOD VOLUNTEERS CAN PROMOTE TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (TCDC).

27. "RECOMMENDATIONS: 1. THAT YOU ENDORSE THE STUDY GROUP FINDING THAT THE FOOD CORPS CONCEPT IS VIABLE, SUBJECT TO AGREEMENT ON APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS.

28. "2. HAVING APPROVED RECOMMENDATION 1, THAT YOU AUTHORIZE US TO DISCUSS THE STUDY GROUP'S VIEWS WITH FAO AND SELECTED OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS WITHOUT MAKING ANY COMMITMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT." YOUNG

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